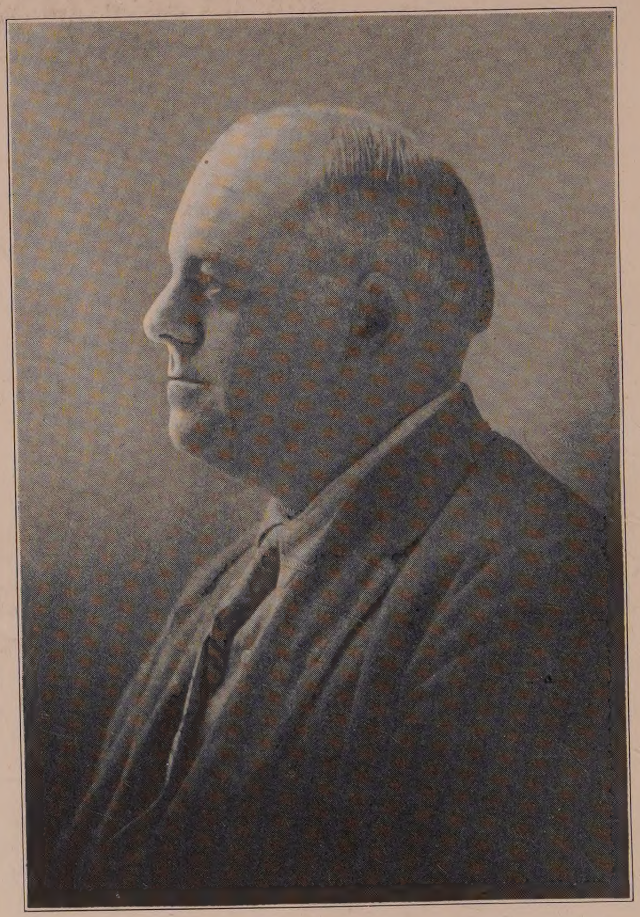
The Old Stone Hitching Post

And Other Poems

Vermont Verse

by

Eugene R. Davis



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THE OLD STONE HITCHING POST

AND

OTHER POEMS

By

EUGENE N. DAVIS

Bridgewater, Vermont

(A Native of Plymouth, Vermont)

Price $2.00

VERMONT VERSE

Enlarged and Illustrated

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1927

This Book of Verse
I dedicate to the
Memory of My Dear
Mother.

EUGENE N. DAVIS

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Bridgewater, Vt.

REVIEW OF EUGENE N. DAVIS

A VERMONT POET

Vermont! How much that word is catching and holding our attention! Ever since the mid-night presidential oath was administered in a little white farm-house by a father to his son, the eyes of the whole nation have been turned toward this little state.

Mountain girth, with brooks rippling along every roadside, with green meadows and blue skies abundant,—all these combine to make this state of valley and hill "a place of beauty and joy forever."

To the native Vermonter, his state typifies all that is strong, brave, true and beautiful, but few have been the men who have been inspired to put their inmost feelings and aspirations into verse.

Eugene N. Davis was born in Plymouth, Vt., and moved to the adjoining town of Bridgewater at the age of seven. Heeding the call of the great out-of-doors, he has communed with nature and tried to learn her secrets. So real has been this contest that the heart of a poet has been revealed. Even at the age of ten, he composed the first two verses of "Has Love Immortality?" Mr. Davis is becoming recognized today as one of Vermont's leading authors.

In this Booklet of Verse are to be found thirty-two of his select poems, each dealing with a different phase of life and its various emotions. From the realism and picturesquesness of the narrative and epic, "The Country Fair," with its fun and humor, to the beauty and the appealing quality of "The Brook"—on into the pathos and yet quiet resignation of "My Lamentations,"—and to the

glad, triumphant declaration and optimism of "Has Love Immortality?"—the poet runs the gamut of all the emotions, longings, hopes and aspirations of our mortal lives.

"The Old Stone Hitching Post," with which this volume opens, seems to live and vibrate with the dramatic instincts that save it from the classification of epics.

Perhaps one of the most exquisite of these poems is "A Story of the Brook," which is the title of the original volume. Rhyme, meter, rhythm, all combine to make this lyric appeal to the ear, as well as to the heart. Comparing the story of the brook, and its final conquest with that of life, strengthens our faith in the ultimate victory and triumph of immortality.

From the beauty of the hills and the ever-changing, restless brook, the poet wanders along the roadside only to tarry at the village Post Office of his home town. It is here that he entertains us with a little dramatic scene that he has witnessed, and which is found in "Number Two! If You Please." This is a clever little pastoral, skillfully written, and an excellent character-study of the village folk. It is vibrant with the jest and jovialty of the characters, who are true to type. One is now dead.

Changing the scenes seems to be a part of our author's profession, for the next picture that he presents shows four types of the American Girl, with a kaleidoscopic sketch of their respective fields, from the four points of the compass. Elevated in style and diction, and unique in construction, it deserves study and thought.

Let us set about our task and duties with renewed hope, courage and outlook if we would emulate the lesson given us by the "Swallow and the Sun." As the lesson

is uplifting in effect, so, in the following poem, are our sentiments and aspirations sustained and perfectly attuned to receive the exhortations to boys and men, to become real men and push away the clouds of heredity that may overcast their horizon. "Our Birthright" proves that the boy and the man may be master of their circumstances. The poem has been dedicated to our president, Calvin Coolidge, and has received favorable comment by him.

On and on with the emotional and inspirational,—on until we are satisfied that they have been requited in the beautiful poem, "Springtide!" For it is through these emotions that our hopes become keyed up to high dreams, taking on the form of expression as seen and felt in this poem. To quote from a man of distinction:—"I have read the delightful little poem, 'Springtide' and it is plain that, in its unusual beauty, it is the finished product of a real poet."

Our poet had added to the nine original poems a collection of his lyrics, epics and pastorals, twenty-three more, that for exquisite charm, general beauty, appealing quality and uplift are unexcelled by any.

A review of this wide variety of subjects and themes treated convinces the reader that, like the transition from the lowly-to-the-high, so is the passing from "January" to "Born: A Day", but a step upward to attain to the sublime.

Any tenseness may be relieved by turning to the "Two Pails of Water," "My First Degree in a Vermont Grange," "John at the Farm: Bowling," or "My Ford Cutter." The lyrical song, "Just a Little Snowflake"

seems to carry music in itself and hardly needs a further setting of melody.

In fine, here may be found a poem for every mood of the day. And the author, in writing and then making these selections to be incorporated herein, has done credit to the book.

THE EDITOR.

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CLOVER HOLE, HALE HOLLOW, PLYMOUTH, VT.

"Nor disdains a harship, builded
For a Speckled-beauty's home,"

THE OLD STONE HITCHING POST

1.

I AM the old stone hitching post,
And I am known from coast to coast,
For scores of years I stand and stare,
I cannot move; can go no where.

2.

What?—lonesome? no; it cannot be;
I have all kinds of company,
But when you talk, cannot reply;
Just hold my peace as you pass by.

3.

I have an awful temper though
And firmly stand; can only glow
My thoughts about and sometimes hit
And make a conscience prick a bit.

4.

Though quite inured to pulls and tugs,
I stand erect; my body shrugs
And trembles, when a shaft is thrust
Against my body or my bust.

5.

A lordly boss came out one morn
And spoke to the hired-man with scorn,
The hired-man came to me with chalk
And set it down, but did not talk.

6.

The next day down the jury came:—
Twelve men of note and Judge of fame—
My testimony mute they took,
The lordly boss the case forsook.

7.

And many cases do I hear,
As a witness known far and near,
My counsels keep, no secrets tell;
Am dumb as an army sentinel.

8.

So here I stand for uprightness.
As horses now are hitching less,
A mission then I must fulfill
And help the law with codicil.

9.

O, memories past are sweet to me!
A soldier grand, with chivalry,
Once took his sweetheart in his arms—
I stood betwixt and heard the charms.

10.

I heard this soldier promise true
That first for country he would do;
His love to her he then would give,
In tones and notes contemplative.

11.

I stayed his mother from a fall,
As John was going—going *all*!—
And though I have a heart of stone,
To me that love stands out alone!

12.

Of sweetheart's care or mother's love,
This love was like the love above!
I saw the sweetheart pale and weep,
The mother did her troubles keep!

13.

And now his picture on the wall
Creates suspense, creates a pall!
The sweetheart wed a man anon;
This mother's left, her *all* is gone!

14.

So joys or troubles have no end,
Their cause I cannot comprehend,
But joys exist and troubles come,
Will be true till millennium.

15.

And here I stand of wide repute,
A witness dumb, a witness mute.
I had my choice, to be a ghost,
Or an immortal hitching post.

A STORY OF THE BROOK

FROM a pocket in a hill,
Shaded o'er by sylvan arms,
Springs a brooklet, first a rill;
Nor appraised of Fate's alarms,
Trickles forth in playful glee,
In its joyful ecstacy.

'Twas enamoured of the meadows
And the lilies of the field;
Felt no iceberg's chilling shadows,
Knew not labors hence to wield.
Still it lingered in reflection,
Ere it left its virgin bed:
Would there cease this deep affection
Ere its happy life were sped?

Now, approaching,—See it tremble
As it nears the breaking brow!—
Glimmers softly; ripples nimble
Break the mountain spring's bright glow.
It reflects a starry crosier,
Dreams no destinies befall;
But expands on youth's ambrosia,
Gurgles gently 'gainst the wall.

Now it glides with soft caresses,
Winds and twists and turns about;
Darts among the silver tresses,
Bubbles gleeful in and out.
There it chatters o'er bright pebbles,
Gayly laughs in fleecy spray;
Sings to sylvan sprites sweet trebles,
Smiles adieu to wooded lay.

Here it ventures from the thicket,
Stops, its steep descent to view;
Rushes, as a foe from picket,
Moans and bursts in falling dew.
Tears converging, from the grasses
On the banks, to depths below.
Thoughts reprint: when childhood passes
From its last beseeming woe.

Still unbridled in its rambles,
Seeks a richer meadow lot;
Scarcely heeds the bristly brambles,
Struggles with a root, well-fought.
Nor disdains a hardship, builded
For a speckled-beauty's home,
As it leaps the weir sun-gilded,
Iris' sceptre kiss' its foam.

Overhead the rolling thunder
Echoes deep to yonder reef;
Rouses Mother Earth in wonder,
Drowns her progeny in grief.
Angry torrents lave their roadbed,
Lashing, make the mountains roar;
Seething, with their bosoms loaded,
Surge the banks with muddy gore.

Swollen streamlets bear the spoils
From the devastated plain;
Joins the wreck from mountain soils,
Roll confused to heaving main.
And the brook, with added sorrow,
Wails its journey to the sea;
Nor refulgence, till the morrow,
Decks its crystal purity.

As it nods to golden morning,
Having convalesced the night,
Seems to heed a conscience' warning,
That the cross' not wrong but right.
Howe'er bent on onward mission,
Sighs; responding eddies twirl;
Then repairs to toil's division,
And a million spindles whirl.

There is felt the doleful rumble,
Heard the weeping timbers groan;
But escapes in stifled mumble,
Heaven's azure gilds its zone.
Thus inured to grief and pleasure,
Lifts the laden barque with grace;
Wins the cup with honored measure,
Victor in a worthy race.

Lo! What Mighty Orb of splendor
Waits, the wanderer to meet!
Hosts of Waves their voices render,
Haste, the conquerer to greet.
Held in rapture at the rhyming
Of the ripples on the sea,
Joins in songs and anthems chiming,
Songs to crystal purity.

THE AMERICAN GIRL

WHEN the Muses we invoke
To describe a parent folk,—
Hallowed age!—
We must dignify our look,
Seek a still, sequestered nook—
Hermitage.
Should Apollo's rhythmic lyre
Strike the strains which must inspire,
Of sweet youth,
Then the heart's enraptured beat
Carries melody replete,
Filled with truth.

And the fairer type so fresh,
E'en embraced in this life's mesh,
Yet above
Many worries, perhaps thought
For the future and its lot—
Unpang'd love!—
Touches soft this lyric chord,
Thrills my thought, but not the word—
Barren pen!—
Where Apollo's rhythmic lyre
Turned to speak and like inspire
'Twere not vain.

Beneath Old Sol's slanting rays,
Where nights are long and short days,
There gleam forth
Northern lights, through crispy air,
To the skyline ev'rywhere,
'Way up North.
Beaming through the captive hair
Of the seal and polar bear,
Virgin troth
Quick'ns the undeceptive glance,
Shines alike her hunting lance,—
In the North.

Under Tropic's breath so balm—
Breath of life, with 'tending calm,—
Winter flies
To a distant, northern clime,
Leaves the Girls in gleeful chime
With the "prize."
What a wondrous complexion!
(Our foremost interjection,)
And that mouth
Bespeaks the mind's intention!
Nor least, such eyes we mention!
In the South.

Vast expanse of meadows roll,
Under vision's apt control,
To the sky;
Roll beneath the wild steed's hoof,
Echo shots of daring proof
To defy!
Thus the Western Girl is seen,
Dashing down the glades so green,
At her best;
Now dismounts, 'mong the flowers,
Beneath the rural bowers,
In the West.

Rich with qualities innate,
Destined never to be late
In Life's run,
First responds the Eastern Girl,
First to see the flag unfurl,
Nobly won.
She's enhanced by Study's toil,
Courts nor Idle's listless soil,
In the least.
With these worthy talents giv'n
Much results of little leav'n
In the East.

"NUMBER TWO! IF YOU PLEASE"

"A QUAINT little building, standing on crest
Of a sightly spot, o'erlooking the rest"
Of the east side of a smart, stirring ville,
Resounding with din from valley to hill;
Is vested with fame tradition hands down,—
Uncle Sam's quarters and other renown.

Daily, the coaches they frequently use
For transporting transient, besides the news,
Arrive, you'll see, some early, some later,
With the fuel for mail-service crater.
Nay, they are laden with burdens of freight
And crowded with children from school, if late.

The text of this tale: to give inflections
Of "Box Two," less a few interjections,
Omitting details, trying to mention
Some facts of the case, from close attention;
May clear our study, with shrewd reflection,
Anent the voice from lobby direction.

"I want the mail!" says a pert little miss,
"Number one or three?"—the hypothesis!
"No!" she exclaims, "Number Two! If you please,
I don't want the box! no money for fees;
Just give me the papers, but look to see
That you miss no letters!—letter for me?"

"Your Pa has said," quotes the fun-loving clerk,
Sorting the mail, doing post-office work,
"That 'letters that come'," with twinkle of eye,
"'Just keep for inspection'—no matter why!"
"Oh don't be so flip!" the pointed retort,
"If you read my letters, then I'll report!"

"Why! this, addressed to a chic little miss,
And pulsing with something I call a kiss,
Contains sweet odors; and gilded with hues
That our foremost artists might better use;
Is trembling with joy, but does not insist
The 'Postmaster, please, will forward the gist'."

"The letter is mine!" the sharp little cry,
"And vengeance of man or law I defy
To keep from its owner this note, so true,
That I wonder why most men are like you!"
The seize of the prize, the dash for the street,
Suspend this drama till morrow repeat.

FORMER P. O., MAIN STREET, BRIDGEWATER, Vt.

"A quaint little building standing on crest
Of a sightly spot,"

MY LAMENTATIONS

WHERE is my jail?—On the sickly bed!
Why not health, but disease instead?
O, where, yes where, is the moral code
That brings us health and no ills bode?

My window-panes are my prison bars!
Beyond I see the lucky stars,—
Lucky to be away from the din,
Lucky to be not hemmed within.

Who said "my star is a lucky one?"
With my trails long since begun!
For my luck now comes disguised in pains;
It never pours unless it rains!

"You think your ills are commensurate
With *debts* that I must compensate?"
And again they ask, "What I would do
With all *their* pains and troubles too!"

So I must endure without their care;
My pains are not for them to bear.
And, better or worse, "I'm not so bad,"
My neighbors say, "but must be mad!"

Where are love and care and charity
Assuaging health's disparity?
Kind words may dispel a heavy heart,
Still better, deeds will joy impart.

O, where are the days of yesteryear?
Where the days of sympathy, cheer?
Let's hearken back to the years gone past—
Sympathy first, levity last!

OUR BIRTHRIGHT

This poem I dedicate to Our Most Esteemed President, . Calvin Coolidge.

"OUR great men are born and not made!"
Some say the old axiom reads.
And men may be known by their birth,
While our boys are known by their deeds.

Our great men are held in esteem,
Their names may be vaunted on high.
Forgotten is virtue or crime,
When names with each other they vie.

Significance then may attach
Itself to a man with a name!
Oblivion may be the fate
Of a man with nothing to claim!

For men's reputations are held
To promote them year by the year,
Upon the high mountain of fame,
With nothing to lose, nor to fear.

But man is a product of boy,
And why do we judge by his worth?
And if boy is father to man,
Then why do we question his birth?

The habits of each may produce
The character claimed to be born.
But credit the boy with the man!
And there let the laurels be worn.

THE SWALLOW AND THE SUN

HIGH in the azure arch
Stood the Sun in its march,
Awed by Eternity!
Realm of the sea and plain,
Wanting no earth's domain,
Naught but fraternity.

High soared the swallow's might,
Soon down in flutt'ring flight,
Hopes never daunted;
Fail it does not intend,
Aims but imply the end,
Even though flaunted;

Down, but to rise once more,
Up, as it cries, "Before
You have been vanquished,
Wrong shall precede the right,
Only to turn in flight,
Utterly languished."

Then,—See the golden sun!
Flushed by its work undone—
Courage! faint-hearted—
Stalk down the vaulted skies!
Day weeps with shaded eyes,
Quickly as parted.

What little bird has brought,
What mighty sun has taught,
This simple story!
List to the swallow's cry,
List to the echo, "Try!"
Echoed in Glory.

HAS LOVE IMMORTALITY?

WHAT! Spring's well-ordered bliss to end?
Nay; Spring and Summer kiss and blend,
And thus unfold a common cause,
With sunshine and the dews for laws.

The sweet perfuméd rose may die
And vanish with a gentle sigh;
Its dell, though boundless as the sea,
Bereft of all but memory!

Shall our true love then wane or fail?
No interloper shall prevail
To fake or break, disturb or curb
Our faith in each or thoughts perturb.

These friendship ties must never part,
Such tokens of a loyal heart!
Our hope, our faith, our trust, our love
Give strength and might like that Above!

THE COUNTRY FAIR

"As everyone saw, the horse at the pole
Leaped from the harness and shot for the goal."

THE COUNTRY FAIR

"GIDDAP! and Go 'long!" cries James to the mare.
"Giddap! Old Mag! we'll be late to the Fair.
Don't let them go by! Don't take any dust!
My calculations: we'll beat or we'll bust."

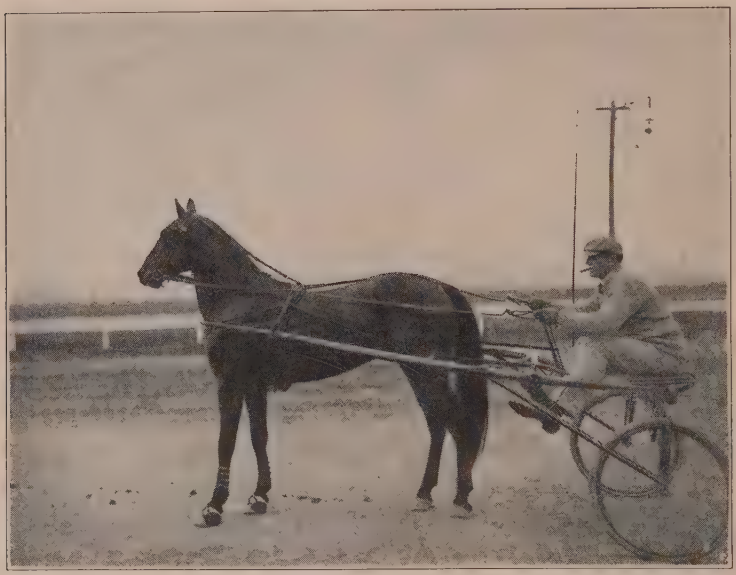
The hum of the cars, the whir of the gigs,
The rattle of carts and other queer rigs,
All help to make up the curious throng,
That's up before dawn to journey along.

We meet at the gate with tickets, or cash,
Then down by the track, at crack of whiplash,
To anchor our horse with rest of the "bunch,"
And leave well-filled baskets for noon-day lunch.

Then back to Midway, all lively and gay,
To hear the hoarse hawkers cry, "Here, I say,
Are many wonders that you never saw,—
The three-tailed monkey, the elephant's paw;

"The man with moustache, three-feet from his nose,
The horse from Asia with fingers and toes,
And why don't you see the girl with a head,
That first colors green and then turns to red?"

"Here! Give me a dime, you're thirsty, I think,
My lemonade cold, the best of a drink;
My candy is sweet, my peanuts are hot,
And limburger cheese, best ever you bought."



"Her nostrils distended, eyes all aglow,
She is waiting command—command to 'go'!"

Now measure your strength, while passing along,
And swing the big sledge and ring the big gong;
Then side-step the crowd, and with a baseball,
And unerring aim, knock over a doll.

Here in the hall that the farmers have built,
Are the big pumpkins and old lady's quilt;
Down in the basement exhibits are wide,
Like milking-machines and cars, side by side.

The merry-go-round must now be reviewed,
The ferris-wheel rival creates a feud;
The calliope-whistle, not at all grand,
More like a donkey, and less like a band.

Now look at the horses, cattle and hogs,
The poultry and sheep and high-blooded dogs.
Next are the denizens of the great deep,
Next, the wild animals, mostly asleep.

And here are the drafters of the big teams
Hauling big bowlders, that break the big beams.
Notice the driver with a black-snake whip,
A-geeing and hawing,—"Now Get! Now Zip!"

The best of all yet: the races to view.
Some horses are old, and some horses new.
The champ of the bit, the stamp of the feet,
Make us stand up just to witness the meet.

Ting-a-ling-ling of the bell in the stand,
Brings forward "Old Mag," the best in the land,
Her nostrils distended, eyes all aglow,
She is waiting command—command to "go!"

The scoring is nervy, the trial is tense,
Our horse, soon pole-horse, did start at the fence.
At "Quarter" she's held and crowded about;
At "Half" she is held and near crowded out.

The "jam" is now broken, and each horse free
To race on its merits, as all could see.
Our "Maggie" vaulted and jumped to get clear,
With nothing ahead and nothing to fear.

"As everyone saw, the horse at the pole
Leaped from the harness and shot for the goal."
Just vindication, not measures of spite,
Had prompted the mare to thus end the fight.

The crowd stood as one within the grand stand,
With voice uplifted and ready the hand.
"Two minutes; you win!" the Judge to the mare;
"The rest are dishonored, no purse to share!"

The race we're convinced, was won by the best;
The lesson for us is really a test:
To see if confusion, dissension, strife,
Will ruin our hopes, or better our life.

Patience exemplified?—far from this tale,
But perserverance and never to fail,
Determination, with courage and grit;
These forces organized: then seize the bit!

And now from the stand we soon must depart,
"Prepare for the home!—most ready to start?"
We spurt and we race, then all jog along,
Quite happy with glee, quite happy with song.

SPRINGTIDE

LOOK! The clouds are fading,
As the new-born light
Wakes, beyond their shading,
To its realm of might.

As the storm kings tremble
At a monarch's tread,
And at last assemble
To their wonted bed,
So the ice blasts travel
To a native land,
And forego the gavel
To a master hand.

See! The clouds are breaking.
Bear this timely news:
How Spring's early waking
Will its warmth diffuse!

Like the fogs ascending
From the liquid main.
And the prisms blending,
In their gentle reign;
Calmly lifts the daydream,
That betokens morn;
Bright is hope's last stray-beam,
That was once forlorn!

Lo! the clouds are rifted.
Balm-like spreads the light!
Cherished hopes, once drifted,
Now retrace their flight.

'Tis the mellow dawning
Of Earth's greatest morn!
And the golden awning,
'Neath which springtime's born.
'Tis the rising floodtide,
Swelled by summer balm,
From Elysian woodside,
That betides the calm!

MY FIRST DEGREE IN A VERMONT GRANGE

1.

O, the goat was strange when I joined the Grange,
Beast of burden was he.
I slackened my pace and drew down my face,
In all solemnity.

MY FIRST DEGREE IN A VERMONT GRANGE

"Splendid composure, eyes all cynosure,
Blind to the punch he'd pack!"

2.

The team was at hand, the goat took the stand,
I mounted Billy's back.
Splendid composure, eyes all cynosure,
Blind to the punch he'd pack!

3.

Next, to the altar (Bill had no halter)
I rode His Majesty.
Great was the singing! bells were a-ringing!
Glorious sights to see!

4.

Then felt a quiver in my young "flivver",
A "Ford" could never do.
"And catapulting, (but, quite insulting
To my dignity, too!)"

5.

I went a-spinning, ('twas Billy's inning;
I couldn't question the fact.)
Could I recover I'd think it over
With more judgment and tact.

6.

But, as I landed, Billy commanded,
With all feet to the floor;
First, with his head up, just as you've read up,
I went out through the door!

7.

There's no telling of pain and its welling
And ridges on my seat!
Spirits dejected; more I expected,
So got up on my feet.

8.

Billy was coming! great was the humming
Of shouts, voices and noise!
He was a-pacing, I was a-bracing,
Seeking my equipoise!

9.

Then, dropping my hat, like an acrobat
I stooped down to restore.
But as I bended, Billy up-ended,
Butting on this new sore!

10.

Paraphenalia and my regalia
All went kiting above:
It was below-belt where I the blow felt,
This abom'nable shove!

11.

I rolled to stair-case, it was a fair chase,
Though propelled from behind.
Billy had caught up, while I had thought up
Unkind words in my mind.

12.

"Meeting with strangers brings many dangers!"
A good truth to beware.
Billy, the he-goat, Nanny, the she-goat:
May I present the pair?

13.

They say it is tame!—this part of the game—
Taking your first degree,
Though you may vary, I am quite wary;
'Tis Billy's jubilee!

MY FORD CUTTER

1.

YOU drive around in splendid style,
Of rivals you are fearless.
You sport a Lincoln, Hudson, Royce,
A Kissell, or a Peerless

"Up over hill and over dale
And over all the fences;"

2.

But of the cars that roll the streets
I'd rather have a "flivver,"
For when I had to climb a hill,
Or had to ford a river,

3.

For first I'd take my Henry F.,
And, likely, for the latter,
Convert my Ford and my stone boat,
(The wheels it doesn't matter!);

4.

I'd put the steering-post in back,
Or change it for a lever.
I'd keep the gates, but not the plates,
Inspectors wouldn't ever

5.

Identify this novel craft
Or list it for a cutter.
They'd notice the exhaust, then say,
"Just hear the darn thing stutter!"

6.

I'd build the deck from stem to stern,
With ample room to turn in.
I'd paint the name of "Ford" on front,
Or, better yet, would burn in.

7.

The running boards I next would use
To build a cab to hide in.
I'd take the rack and slant it back,
On which to sit, or ride in.

8.

I'd put the seat beneath my feet
To cure my rheumatism;
For screws and coils are not for boils,
Nor nails for pessimism.

9.

Then, with the curtains for the holes,
I'd plug them tight with oakum,
For sure I know, I then could go
From Tokio to Yokum.

10.

The carburetor must sit high,
To keep it dry and dusty;
The whistle, likewise, must be dry,
Just so it won't get rusty.

11.

The radiator I'd fill up,
But not of rum's epistle,
For Henry's vow would not allow
A drop to wet her whistle.

12.

And with the "block" I'd build a clock;
I'd use the "leaves" for hairsprings;
Then get some locks and make a box,
And label it, "To Bear Things."

13.

Of "tools and kit" I'd think a bit,
And plan to get a-plenty:
I'd get the wrench from off the bench;
Would need some over twenty

14.

To turn the nuts and hold the butts,
In tight'ning up her hatches;
Then, get old pails and bring some nails,
To fix up all the patches.

15.

The ising-glass I'd put in back
The windshield use for hearses:
You can't tell—if you go to hell!—
When the darned old thing reverses!

16.

So if my "Henry" ever kicks,
I'll back her to a wharfing,
And let her spit, like dispeptics,
'Till she is over coughing.

17.

'Most any Ford will always go
Much better back than forward!
Just like the wind, when blowing South,
May suddenly go Nor'ward!

18.

Now of the parts that make a Ford,
Have I left out a portion?
For if by chance, or circumstance,
These plans should mean abortion,

19.

A mister-Ford might sue this Board,
Of course, take me for slander.
"And kill the goose that laid the egg
That grew the golden gander!"

20.

With parts assembled for this craft,
Though built for fun or battle,
There's just one thing that is missing:
For I forgot the rattle!

21.

I sail the river far and wide,
The envy of my neighbors.
The pish-wish, plug-chug of this tug:
Good signs of inward labors!

22.

Then heading straight right up the bank,
(The "runs" began to crackle!)
I thought we'd have to get some ropes
And pull it up with tackle.

23.

But my Old Henry did not halt,
Nor wait for invitation;
She hauled and bawled and then she crawled
Right up the inclination!

24.

She reached the top, but did not stop,
With impetus a-growing,
She kept right on—automaton!
With gas and sparks a-blowing.

25.

Up over hill and over dale
And over all the fences;
And over bogs, like all ground hogs,
Not counting consequences.

26.

But through this heat I kept my seat,
As drivers will endeavor.
For when you try to drive a Ford
You cannot sleep—no never!

27.

Then to the door I brought this poor
Old Ford for a vacation;
And turned her loose,—for what's the use?—
She'll go on reputation!

TWO PAILS OF WATER

I remember, yes, remember
Of the river down below;
Of the side hill I descended,
When for water I must go;
Of the twisting and the whisking,
Of the frisking and the risking;
Of the two tin pails a-discing,
As I bent and shot them low.

But this only made me trouble,
As I had to pick them up;
Had to chase them, grounding, bounding,
As you would a big tin cup.
Now the water I was dipping
And the stones I was a-skipping,
As a man came up "a-ripping"
And then seized me like a pup.

So, again, I got in trouble,
As I stooped to get a stone;
Though I bandied, yet I landed
Down the bank and quite alone!
O, the water was a-slopping!
O, my stockings were a-sopping!
And this daddie was "a-hopping"!
Using words in undertone.

Now I could not catch a shiner,
As I had no time to stop;
So I headed, though I dreaded,
This steep climb up to the top.
"One-two-three! such steps!" I thundered
"Four-five-six!" and still I wondered
"Seven-eight-nine!" and then I blundered!
And the pails both took a flop!

And, of course, went banging, whanging,
Then hung up on burdock roots
But I saved most all the water,
As it went into my boots!
O, such peals of laughter gliding!
With such storms and threats deciding!
From the backdoor, less confiding,
Came the jeers and all the hoots!

But to swear, I saw the folly,
As my hat I threw below;
In the wind it tousled, tumbled,
Where the waters swiftly flow.
Is there comfort then consoling,
When with you they are condoling,
And your temper not controlling?
For an answer, I'll say, "No!"

"Hold your temper, then!"—the maxim;
Let the water slop and spill!
Though you lose both pails and handles,
Let your boots the water fill!
Watch your step and where you're placing!
Then, when trials you are facing,
You'll have skill and trust embracing,
Here's the secret of a Will.

JUST THROW OUT GOOD AND LET FOLKS LIVE

1.

LIFE is like a sieve,
The more you sift the more you give.
Some save the chaff and lose the wheat,
Chaff you cannot eat.
If you lose the meat
How can you compete
With a world discreet?
Then watch the kernels where they fall,
Be sure you get them, one and all!
Just let the chaff blow far and high,
And let the limit be the sky;
Then keep the good and train your eye,
And never chances let go by!
But make them multiply!

2.

Is your life a sieve?
Then throw out good and let folks live.
Don't keep the good and hoard the gold!
Works are manifold;
Nothing new, but old.
When these truths unfold
Let your heart be bold
And radiate a smile or two,
And drop the wheat where good will do,
Don't make the chaff some fellows share!
Just ask to let your lots compare
And seek to know hard luck and where
A helping hand perhaps can spare,
Or burdens help to bear!

HIRAM READS HIS NEWSPAPER

1.

"BY Ginger! Nell, my crops are lost!
The papers say another frost."
"Hey! Tom, take blankets off the beds,
We'll save the squash and cabbage heads.

2.

"The Far-East Question is, I Swan!
Again stirred up, our troops withdrawn!
I have a mind, with blunderbuss,
To go and help them stop the fuss!

3.

"And here's a ship gone out to sea,
That's wanted by its Company.
How could they think a ship can sail
Upon dry land? Although a whale

4.

"Within my swamp one time was seen;
They threw the picture on the screen.
No one could figure out, I Swan!
Just how both his hind legs had gone!

5.

"And here it says 'A Gambler Shot!'
The officers lost all the pot.
Don't understand what this implies;
But guess it's more of their darned lies.

6.

"I never saw a gambler yet,
And so, of course, I would not bet;
Though skeptic that such men exist;
I'm peeved to know 'News' will persist

7.

"In dragging down a man's good name,
Or link it with a winsome dame.
'A robber, then,' the 'News' will say,
'Just robbed a miss on our highway'.

8.

"Why make him show a penitence
Before he proves his innocence?
The miss, they say: A Chorus Girl,
Does from her shoulders streamlets curl;

9.

"A coat she wore, the paper states,
Not either side the other mates.
A freakish girl! A freakish cloak!
I'm glad I never meet such folk!

10.

"Her costume gay; a dimpled chin;
She also has a pinkish skin.
The girl is pretty! I've no doubt,
But don't appeal to this 'Old Gout!'

11.

"Could I identify this miss,
I'd try the old hypothesis:
I'd let her think that I was 'game,'
Of course, this would not hurt *my* name!

12.

"And, furthermore, if capture make,
I'd keep the girl for Justice' sake.
What difference would make to you,
Should I this crime fix wrong end to?

13.

"I'd rather board the girl a week
And let the man his freedom seek.
The *one* we have, the *other* not,
I'd save the County quite a lot.

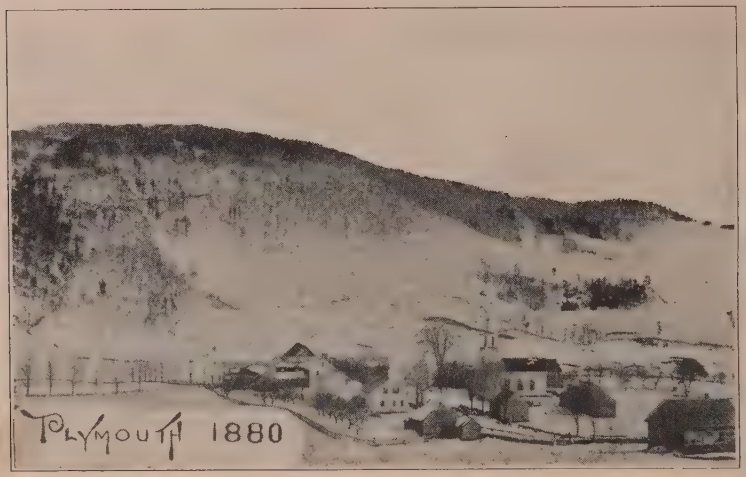
14.

"Look! Nell; Look Out! There goes that girl!
My head is light, I'm in a whirl!
Enforce the law!—where is my hat?—
I'll get that *girl!*—and that is that!"

THE FISHERMAN'S PRAYER

1.

LET me hear the water running!
Let me feel it's dewy spray!
Let me see the ripples cunning!
Coursing down the rocky way!



2.

There are brooks of length and measure,
Some are shallow, some are deep.
There are brooks of lurking treasure
In the dark pools, where they sleep.

3.

I betake me to the woodside,
To the brook that I so love!
Here I wait the coming flood tide,
And the trout from up above;

4.

Now, unbuckle all my tackle!
As I watch the brook below.
First I'll use this "red-brown hackle"
Where the waters silent flow.

5.

Then from "Montreal" to "Midget,"
As I scan my list of bait.
Now I hesitate, now fidget,
When the first strike I must wait.

6.

O, I spy a spotted dandy!
"Two-feet long, or more!" I'll bet!
If with rod and reel I'm handy,
Then this big trout I must get!

7.

"Strike! O, strike! you Speckled Beauty,
Let me feel your tug and thrill.
Just for pleasure, not for duty,
Let me then my basket fill!"

8.

"Seize the bait! O, seize it! Beauty,
Grab the fly upon the hook!
Let me emulate the Uté
With a fly from in my 'book.'"

9.

There "are" sports and there is pleasure,
There are recreations fine.
But of all the things I treasure,
Let me have the "rod and line"!

JUST A LITTLE SNOWFLAKE

1.

JUST a little snowflake!
Piling up with others,
I have lots of sisters
And a lot of brothers.

2.

I come tumbling, tossing,
Then landing in a heap;
I will make a visit,
And then may go to sleep.

3.

I was once a goblin,
A little fairy elf;
Came from land of nowhere
Just as you did, yourself.

4.

From this land of nowhere
Where else then could I go?
For this seemed the best place
That I could see below.

5.

Here I'll have a party,
With sherbet and ice cream,—
This our leading special,
A part of our big scheme.

6.

You should see my parlor!
Where nooks and dells abound.
Cozy little shelter!
From wind that's blowing 'round.

7.

O, I play the breezes
And gambol with the wind!
With most sports familiar;
At Summer am chagrined;

8.

Have no use for temper,
Although I bite and sting;
Am fleet, when you blow me,
As partridge on the wing.

9.

I like to tease Æolus
And whistle through the trees,
I stop oft; stay aloft,
While waiting for the breeze.

10.

I once liked the sunshine.
Now, cry and go away.
When you see me next time
'Twill be a colder day.

Don't snuggle up with mufflers!
Why hold your mouth awry?
I might want to kiss you,
Before I say, "Good-bye!"

WHAT IS THAT WORD?

1.

"SHALL I write verse?—Why not?" I say,
"And improvise some verse each day!"
Reserve of thought to me is pow'r,
Reserved for any needful hour.

2.

A reservoir of facts I store.
These bookish shelves of studied lore,
Hold manuscripts piled high and wide,
Though some of them I push aside.

3.

I sort them over carefully,
And I divide them prayerfully;
And then send out the best of them
And put away the rest of them.

4.

Then why invoke that hateful word?
The word I wish I'd never heard!
Why send me papers held with clips?
Or any more rejection slips?

CHRIST WAS BORN

1.

OUR Christ was born, our load to share,
Our sins placate, our lives to spare.
Immortal Christ! His All doth give,
A soul to save, a soul to live.

2.

And more than this, Our Christ was born
To give His Hope to all forlorn.
He lifts us up from valleys deep
And then our footsteps He doth keep.

3.

From lowly babe to crownéd King,
A Love He gives, a Joy doth bring.
In darkness then we cease to grope
Our heart He fills with Springs of Hope.

4.

Our Christ was born; He sees within;
He knows our lives are full of sin;
But has compassion when we fall,
For on the Cross He pays it all!

MR. FORD HAS A DREAM

1.

IT takes four wheels to run a car,
But why use two for steering?
Why not take one as big as both
And hitch it to the gearing?

2.

You'd gain in traction and in pow'r,
When either grade you're taking;
Could coast down hill and stop at will,
The fifth wheel use for braking.

3.

Then, with this wheel, could crank the car,
Or, maybe, blow the whistle.
There'd be no plugs, nor stems, nor arms,
Nor parapets to bristle.

4.

The four-wheel brake is all the rage.
One car I know has six on.
And if inventions we must have,
The Fifth Wheel we should fix on.

5.

We'd let it idle, when not used,
To spin its own direction.
And, as a compass at cross-roads,
Would get the intersection.

6.

So this, the model of my dreams!
The creature of my fancies!
I build and wield, though cannot shield;
Am taking awful chances!

7.

A million cool I still may pool,
When I come to my senses.
I recognize no limits fixed;
Have organized no fences.

8.

The five-wheeled car, the coming thing!
Part-product of my bosses;
I'll cut the price, or shake the dice,
To see who stands the losses.

9.

Now if I make this dream of dreams,
Whose capital is working?
I furnish gumption, mind and brain,
My help, they, do the clerking.

DOCTOR KNOWS-IT-ALL

I HAVE no patience with the sick,
Am with their plaints disgusted!
Why do they to the doctor go,
To have their ills adjusted?

I'm never sick! I have no ills!
I have no pains to label!
I have the strength to run a mile,
Or break a half-inch cable!

I rise early in the morn,
For I feel good and rested;
Am ready for a big day's work!
For health in me is vested.

I have no colds, nor grippe, disease;
Immune to all such dangers;
My nerves, my heart, my stomach, all,
Are tough as a mountain-ranger's!

I think their system is all wrong!—
I mean their ways of doing;—
For if they knew as much as *I*
They'd try *my way* of chewing.

I tell them they sit down too much:
"Get out and do more walking!
And never to the bed resort!"—
But what's the use of talking?

"You can't make hair on a toad's back grow!"
Or change some men's opinion!
You set these words in boldest type,
To them they look like minion!

Now could I have the charge of things,
I'd change things up completely,
I'd have the sick do *all* the work!
Of course, do it discreetly!

I hate to hear a man "take on,"
Complain, or hear him moaning!
And should he ever work for me,
I would fire him for groaning!

With doctors less, I'd take the field
And write my own prescriptions;
I'd make the sick stop all this fuss!—
No "catnip-tea conniptions!"

So don't "take on", "or don't complain!"
But just keep on a moving,
For though you ail, 'twill not avail!
But will take more for proving.

THE INFINITE STRUGGLE

1.

FORWARD! then backward!—which way do we go?
I struggle upward, then fall down below!
Onward! yes, onward! to goal I would reach.
Why, then, my motives so quick to impeach?

2.

"Existence a struggle!"—yes; I agree.
Many things happen to keep us at sea.
Vision is blinded, my step is not sure;
Brotherhood lacking, my ways you abjure.

3.

Why not with nectar my goblet then fill?
Sufficient the task to just climb the hill!
Why make it harder my burdens to bear?
For help I shall need, or I will despair!

4.

Shoulder to shoulder! let's get to the wheel!
Fellowship needed: make this an appeal.
Then make the world blush with shame for its deeds!
Contention dismiss, when wrong it concedes.

5.

Here is the crux of the matter in hand:
Forward and backward, all over the land,
Struggling existence!—cooperate all!
Fellowship wanted!—respond to the call!

WHAT IS HISTORY?

I HAVE a faith in my God up above;
Believe in an Infinite God of Love!
Though hope is the well-spring of my belief,
All records come from history brief.

If you say "Waterloo never was fought",
Then I will cancel the tale about Lot!
If Gettysburg Battle then were a hoax,
We will discredit all Biblical folks!

The Bible, with others, we then will impugn!
Heresy doctrines, of course, importune!
This is your weapon, though backing you lack,
But always ready to make an attack!

As you are agnostic, by what do you preach?
And by what credentials a sermon impeach?
Have you a wisdom, a knowledge, or lore,
To shake this foundation when tenets explore?

Don't compromise when the balance is weighed!
Make your decision, be solid and staid!
If you have arguments that can prevail,
Then meet Religion with armor and mail!

But study this problem; be then prepared
To open your mind when great truths are bared!
Accept of a faith that gives you a clue
To a FUTURE LIFE when this one is through!

JOHN AT THE FARM

Bowling

"JUMPING Jehosaphat! Where is my pail?
Here in my hand is only the bail!
Now you are the slickest cow that I know!
You can kick ten-pins down in a row!

"Horses will frolic and sheep will cavort,
They have nothing on your kind of sport.
You have a 'twister', first, shoots from the hip,
It is a 'floater', first, is a 'dip'.

"Here is the secret you have in the play,
But I'd rather bowl some other way,—
As I go a-spinning, and not with intent,
Down the stable, election-hell-bent!

"Now if you must bowl the alley is yours!
I cannot navigate on 'all fours'.
This is advantage you have in the game!
Bowling, for you, must be pretty tame!"

Mary will say, when she looks at my hand:
"John where's the milk?—the milk I demand!"
But I'm the victim of bad circumstance,
Nothing to show but milk on my pants!

Back to the city I hie and I go!
Back from the farm to the game I know,
For there it is played as *I* understand,
Not like the way of the country-land!

CHRIST SHALL LEAD

OUR Christ arose so men could know
That mind is master over mass.
And Christ arose so men could see
That prophecies must come to pass.

Our Christ redeemed a morbid world;
He lifts us to the planes above.
This one great deed of amnesty,
When Christ He gave, proves God is Love!

An avenue of Faith we find,
That reaches through a maze of doubt.
An avenue of Hope we see
That shows the journey then throughout.

A beacon shines!—what is that Light?—
You hear a Saviour's Trumpet blast!
Our Christ arose. The bells shall ring,
And lead the way to joy at last!

BILLY, MY OFFICE GOAT

MOST goats intelligent; some men are *not*
So why blame me for the goat that I got?
I have a reason for things that I do,
If this goat suits *me,* then why not suit you?

I can't afford a stenographer's wage,
Nor can I afford to lawyer engage;
There's thinking, writing and work to be done,
Then there are various errands to run.

Billy is gentle as goat we'd expect,
And will come hither when hand I have becked.
Not a propensity (this you may doubt)
To start up trouble, or butt from without.

Tractable Billy! He works like a slave!
Articles, poems and stories to save.
Now what would I do if Billy should die?
With him the other world would occupy.

Will I be forgotten? My labors lost?
My works and papers be tumbled and toss'd?
And who'll get the credit for things that I wrote?—
The credit to me? or my Billy Goat?

FROM THE BLADE TO THE TREE

I'M optimistic you will see,
And follow the course from blade to tree;
I mean the blade, the first in the suit,
The tree and leaf, the last, or its fruit.
A course in growth each scholar should take,
From blade to tree development make,
Nor skepticism undertake.

There's skepticism, it may be,
When our lives and logic disagree.
In evolution I have no cant,
But must admit the growth of the plant.
As laws of nature do us convince,
Do I understand why first, not since,
A man may be a royal prince.

So optimistic I must be,
And follow the line in pedigree.
With his faith in God and next in man,
Any platitudinarian
Affirms his lineal line descent:
As the tree is grown the blade was bent,
And knows 'tis God's arbitrament!

MY CONFESSIONS

1.

SIT me here for my bucolic,
Using words that are symbolic;
Using words that flit and flutter;
Using some that scarce do utter;

2.

Finding words in dictionaries,
Wanting none that's vague or varies;
Trying some to give expression,
Trying, though, is but confession.

3.

It's a task for any poet,
(He may rhyme and never know it!)
Just to sit and think and ponder
And describe a scene o'er yonder!

4.

Or give sense and stress and reasons,
To amalgamate the seasons;
Then dissect the potent causes
Of a Force that never pauses!

5.

I will sit and wait and wonder!
I will stand and wail and thunder!
At the words that never fashion,
Till I'm in a rage, or passion!

6.

Then I'll hie me to my closet
For a word that's right, because it
Seems to rhyme and seems to jingle,
Seems to fit and seems to mingle.

7.

But the words of my invention
May require a new declension,
As you try to sense their meaning,
Without bias, without leaning.

8.

It is then that you will hasten,
Not to cherish, but to chasten,
As you study my excursion
Into fields of rare diversion.

9.

So apologies I offer
When my humble verse I proffer.
Though there's little art to show it,
I *had* called myself a poet!

AN ODE TO 1925

I MOURN for the year as it pines away!
Year of Nineteen-Twenty-Five,
I yearn for the good and mourn for the bad,
And pray for good to survive.

There are mem'ries fraught with deeds you have taught,
With malice or hate toward none!
I think of the good and think of the bad,
While counting the things I've done.

My Good Samaritan work I recall!
Perhaps in a boastful way,
(We must help the good and must help the bad,
Or Justice will ne'er repay.)

"I thank Thee for blessings that TIME bestows!
In lessons, profit and loss,"
With profit in good and loss in the bad,
Accounts must balance across.

One Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty Five!
The tears well up in my eyes!
I cherish the good and grieve for the bad,
When obsequies solemnize.

THE HAND OF GOD

1.

NEARLY five hundred years for a fact,
Just four-eighty! to be exact,
Was the oppression of Israel's Band,
By law and edict at Pharaoh's hand!
Then was delivered at Our Maker's Nod,
And by the outstretching of Moses' Rod,
Just to show the Hand of God!

2.

When Moses' Rod did a serpent become,
Then did frogs and fleas and flies start to roam;
They settled down upon Pharaoh's land.
Was Pharaoh blind to miracles grand,
When God had removed the river of blood?
But the King defied the Almighty Rod!
Would not see the Hand of God!

3.

Why are these Rivers of Trials we cross,
Infested by frogs and flies and the dross?
Then why not avoid these bridges of Fate?
Try the next crossing! or, better yet, wait!
Some bridges are long, and some bridges broad;
Some things we accept. Some things overawed
By the Mighty Hand of God!

4.

The bridge of Temptation we find every day!
Riches and lust are put in our way.
Simple and minor to us they may seem;
Omission, commission; some will blaspheme!
You know the evil when conscience is gnawed,
And though may deny the strength of the Rod;
Must admit the Hand of God!

5.

What Cause gives us food? From what do we drink?
What Cause gives us dress? By what do we think?
What is this Spring of Existence we hold?
If not Creation by Our God of Old?
If you are skeptic then you will be odd.
So why doubt the power of Moses' Rod?
Wielded by the Hand of God!

AUTHOR'S HOME TOWN

"January! Cold and bleak and dreary!"

JANUARY

JANUARY! Cold and bleak and dreary!
Your days of tenure thirty-one.
Your horoscope
Gives little hope!
As work begun may ne'er be done.
I am cold and blue, my heart is weary!
My fires are low, my blood runs slow;
My courage faint!
My soul distraint!
No beacons shine, no bright lights glow!
Are such days cheery?

Let's hope against hope! though days are chilling,
And then "take the bull by the horns!"
Wonderful jinx!
Great as a sphinx!
This creature, embellished, adorns
Imagination. Why let the killing
Of our hopes be borne as a fear?
They may arise
In glad disguise,
To bring us new outlook and cheer.
The storm is stilling!

BORN: A DAY

THE day is born! Its face is bold,
What possibilities unfold!
Our yesterday you may deplore,
This day you never saw before!

You may rise early in the morn
And think new days are never born!
All days to you may be alike;
A mediocre seam may strike.

You grope along the same old ruts,
Your ear is deaf; your vision shuts
And closes when the veil is lift
To show the folly of your drift.

You dwell upon the yesteryears,
You mingle hopes with future fears;
You see but clouds upon your sky,
When promise within reach doth lie.

Then shake afar this morbid spell!
Awake! Arise! your fears to quell.
Don't mourn or pine o'er a mistake,
For errors we will always make.

The Day is born! The Day is new
Why look you back or glance askew?
Suffice to watch the road ahead!
Where never yet a soul did tread.

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